

aren't are feeling the negative effects of inflation and broken supply chains.

What has happened over the past few years is proof that these Tennessee families and businesses are much better at spending their own money than the Federal Government is at spending taxpayer money. They have to be because if they were as reckless with their paychecks as the Biden administration is with taxpayer funds, they would have gone bankrupt a long time ago.

When they saw what the President put together in his latest budget request, they were not surprised, but they were incredibly discouraged at the idea of another year of Federal spending that leaves our southern border vulnerable and guarantees another year of unsustainable inflation.

Joe Biden and the Democrats have made it their mission to tax and spend this country into oblivion, but adding insult to injury is their commitment to ignoring the actual problems the American people are facing on a local level: inflation, drugs, crime, and continued supply chain problems.

During my recent visit with officials in Cannon County, they had a lot to say about how this failure to govern has affected their ability to follow through on even the most basic public works projects.

Like many distressed counties around the country, Cannon County received emergency funding during the pandemic. They put it toward short-term projects that, for this community, were really a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to grow.

But here is the problem: Over the past 2 years, my Democratic colleagues have spent so much money and driven inflation so high that any progress Cannon County leaders could have made with those projects has been completely washed out by the overall effects of inflation.

For Joe Biden and the Democrats, this is something that is easily brushed aside, but for the people of Cannon County, it means that something as essential as a water project is stalled indefinitely.

The topography of Cannon County makes it pretty hard to bring water in, but with this particular project, they would have been able to install a water line from neighboring Warren County and alleviate the pressure on their water supply. It wasn't a perfect solution, but it would have provided relief.

But, now, inflation and supply chain breakdowns have turned this project into a nightmare. Local leaders are questioning the construction estimates because they change or expire before their contractors can get their hands on the right materials. This means that by the time those materials come in, the county may not be able to pay for the work, and on and on it goes. There is no light at the end of the tunnel.

The White House can spin this all they want, but this is not how business

normally works. Joe Biden and the Democrats have embraced dysfunction at every turn and Tennesseans—they are the ones who are suffering.

Our wide-open southern border has come up in every single county meeting I have taken since Joe Biden took his oath of office, and, over the past few years, we have watched the situation become increasingly dire.

Every town is a border town, and every State is a border State, including Tennessee.

When I was in McMinnville, earlier this year, local leaders described to me in great detail how the Biden administration's refusal to secure the border has pushed local police to the breaking point. For a town that small, the people of McMinnville should not be suffering from so much crime. But the flow of drugs is out of control, and the law enforcement officials I spoke with can trace it from their neighborhoods to the closest cartel distribution hub in Atlanta and then down to the southern border.

They find fentanyl in just about every drug that they seize—deadly fentanyl. Overdoses caused by marijuana laced with fentanyl are common now, something that just a few years ago would have been rare if not unthinkable.

The rampant availability of drugs has caused a crisis among teens and young people, who are now using at such a rate that law enforcement has nowhere to house juvenile offenders. Fentanyl, the leading killer of Americans age 18 to 45. Fentanyl, the fastest growing killer of children under 18 fentanyl. Fentanyl that is flooding across our southern border—14,000 pounds apprehended last year by Border Patrol. That is enough to kill 3.3 billion people—3.3 billion people.

This is why every town is a border State. It is why every single local law enforcement official is saying: We need help. Secure that southern border.

When I have talked to them about what they need to get a grip on the fentanyl issue, they have told me the same thing that local officials are telling other Members of this body: Secure the border and make the resources available so that we can get a grip on this. They need to hire more law enforcement officers. They need to give them better pay and training, and they need to expand antidrug programming for younger children. As sad as that is, they are the ones who are being introduced to and affected by these drugs.

You could visit any county in the United States and probably hear very similar stories from local officials who have worked hard, kept their own spending in check, and who have done their best to plan for the future of their communities. They love their communities. They are worried about crime. They are worried about drugs. They want more choice and options for education. They want security in their local streets.

Officials in the White House and here on Capitol Hill know what their poli-

cies have done to these local leaders and to the American people. They also know that the President's budget request doesn't reflect what they need or even what they want.

They are asking for relief. They are not asking for new programs. They are not asking for pie in the sky. They are not wanting to see more bailouts. They don't need more mandates.

What they need is relief—relief that will address inflation, relief that will address supply chains, relief that will address the drugs and the crime that is flowing across that southern border.

These are issues they look at as root causes of rampant, out-of-control crime and out-of-control spending that has stalled growth in many communities.

They won't be able to do that until Joe Biden and the Democrats realign their priorities with those of the American people.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. KELLY. Mr. President, I ask that the scheduled vote occur immediately.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 62, Brent Neiman, of Illinois, to be a Deputy Under Secretary of the Treasury.

Charles E. Schumer, Ron Wyden, Jack Reed, Gary C. Peters, Tina Smith, Sherrod Brown, Brian Schatz, Ben Ray, Luján, Elizabeth Warren, Christopher A. Coons, Martin Heinrich, Christopher Murphy, Tammy Baldwin, Debbie Stabenow, Alex Padilla, Margaret Wood Hassan, Michael F. Bennet.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Brent Neiman, of Illinois, to be a Deputy Under Secretary of the Treasury, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN), the Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. FETTERMAN), and the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO), the Senator from Texas (Mr. CRUZ), the Senator from Kentucky (Mr. McCONNELL), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISC), and the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 52, nays 40, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 53 Ex.]

YEAS—52

Baldwin	Hickenlooper	Schatz
Bennet	Hirono	Schumer
Blumenthal	Kaine	Shaheen
Booker	Kelly	Sinema
Brown	King	Smith
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Cardin	Lujan	Tester
Carper	Markey	Tillis
Casey	Menendez	Van Hollen
Collins	Merkley	Warner
Coons	Murkowski	Warren
Cortez Masto	Murphy	Warren
Duckworth	Murray	Welch
Durbin	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Peters	Wyden
Grassley	Reed	Young
Hassan	Rosen	
Heinrich	Sanders	

NAYS—40

Blackburn	Graham	Paul
Boozman	Hagerty	Ricketts
Braun	Hawley	Romney
Britt	Hoeben	Rounds
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Rubio
Capito	Johnson	Schmitt
Cassidy	Kennedy	Scott (FL)
Cornyn	Lankford	Sullivan
Cotton	Lee	Thune
Cramer	Lummis	Tuberville
Crapo	Manchin	Vance
Daines	Marshall	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	
Fischer	Mullin	

NOT VOTING—8

Barrasso	Fetterman	Risch
Cruz	McConnell	Scott (SC)
Feinstein	Padilla	

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. WARNOCK). On this vote, the yeas are 52, the nays are 40.

The motion is agreed to.

PRO ACT

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, a little over a decade ago, Michigan lawmakers convened a session in the dark of the night. They put padlocks on the doors of the State Capitol so that they wouldn't have to listen to the protesters who had gathered outside.

They had come to Lansing to pass "right to work," a policy that weakened the power of unions all across Michigan. But today—today—my colleagues in the State legislature passed legislation in the State senate to repeal that law, and it now moves to the house next week.

They are stepping up. They are stepping up because they understand that we are living through a crucial moment. The richest Americans are only getting richer, while many working people are left behind, unable to reap the benefits of the wealth that they helped to create.

Labor unions are the best tool that we have to buck that trend. They expand and empower the middle class. They allow workers to negotiate for better wages and safer workplaces and the right to retire with dignity. But union membership is at an alltime low. Many employers intimidate workers who attempt to organize and retaliate against those who are able to come together. It is one reason that the gap between rich and poor continues to grow.

In order to keep building an economy that works for everyone, we need to

take a lesson from my home State of Michigan. We need to breathe new life into American unions, and we need to pass the PRO Act. This legislation will empower workers to exercise their right to organize. It will hold employers accountable for violating workers' rights. It will secure free, fair, and safe union elections, and it will preempt right-to-work laws across the country. Simply put, the PRO Act will make it easier for working people everywhere to join a union.

As a Michigander, the right to organize is a pillar of my State. Modern unions were born in Flint, MI, when autoworkers banded together in the winter of 1936 for better pay and working conditions. Their 44-day strike started a movement that formed the backbone of the American middle class.

But this is also very personal to me. My dad was a teacher and a member of the MEA. My father-in-law is a proud member of UAW Local 5960 as a retiree. My mother, a nurse's aide, worked tirelessly with the SEIU to organize her workplace. And when management tried to sway her to not support the union with a raise, she refused. She would not quit. She would not stop her fight until everyone got a better deal and everyone got a raise. And after the employees voted to unionize, they made her a union steward. She taught me the value of standing up and fighting for your rights, no matter what is in your way.

We have seen what is possible when we choose to stand up for working people. We enacted the bipartisan infrastructure deal, which will create good-paying union jobs all across our country and penalize companies that break the labor law. Just over 2 years ago, we passed the Butch Lewis Act and secured pensions for millions of American workers.

These victories have helped people all across our country, and we can build on that work by passing the PRO Act. It is a comprehensive, common-sense piece of legislation that we have to get across the finish line. The namesake of this bill is former AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, a legend in the labor movement and a tireless advocate for working people.

Just before he died, he addressed a group of Alabama coal miners who were in the throes of a strike, and he told them: We are not going to give up. We are not going to give in. We will prevail. One day longer, one day stronger.

His words ring as true today as they did that night in Brookwood, AL. We are not giving in or giving up, and together we will prevail. I am proud to stand in solidarity with labor unions all across Michigan, as well as all across this country, as a cosponsor of the PRO Act, and I will continue to do everything in my power to see that it gets passed.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, the Senate consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 67, Michael Ratney, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; that the Senate vote on the nomination, without intervening action or debate; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Michael Alan Ratney, of Massachusetts, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Thereupon, the Senate proceeded to consider the nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Ratney nomination?

The nomination was confirmed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUNSHINE WEEK

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to commemorate Sunshine Week. Sunshine Week coincides each year with March 16, one of our Founding Fathers' birthdays: James Madison. Madison is widely known as the father of open government.

The sunshine I am talking about isn't the kind that helps the corn grow in Iowa. Sunshine Week is dedicated to promoting government accountability to the source from which all government derives its power: the people. Before joining the Supreme Court in 1916, Justice Louis Brandeis wrote: "Sunlight is said to be the best of disinfectants: electric light the most efficient policeman." As a longtime champion for an open, accessible government, I speak today in support of those enduring principles.

In great works of literature, readers often remember a novel's opening line even if they forget the rest. When one hears that line, it immediately calls to mind the entire book. Well the same is true of our Constitution, a document that both defines the powers of the